

To: Sullivan, Greg[Sullivan.Greg@epa.gov]
From: Morning Energy
Sent: Thur 8/13/2015 2:02:00 PM
Subject: POLITICO's Morning Energy, presented by Chevron: EPA stops work on other mines, tailing facilities — Rubio: Spill shows 'arrogance' — U.S. cash crunch may rattle global climate deal

By Alex Guillén

With help from Elana Schor and Darius Dixon

McCARTHY ORDERS STOP ON MINE WORK FOLLOWING SPILL: EPA

Administrator Gina McCarthy has ordered the agency to halt all field investigation work at mines and tailings facilities, except for cases of "imminent risk," pending an investigation of its accidental release of 3 million gallons of polluted water from an abandoned mine into Colorado's Animas River. "We are in the process of initiating an independent assessment by a sister federal agency or another external entity to examine the factors that led to last week's incident," McCarthy wrote in her order to regional officials. "Based on the outcome from that assessment, we will determine what actions may be necessary to avoid similar incidents at other sites." McCarthy added that EPA is looking for any other sites similar to the Gold King Mine to flag any immediate threats.

Who will watch the watchers? Investigations of the spill have already, with EPA conducting an internal investigation into the spill McCarthy promised will be rigorous. "We will hold ourselves to a higher standard than anyone else," she said in Colorado yesterday. There's also the independent inquiry McCarthy mentioned, though details remain scarce about that effort. And EPA's inspector general, at the behest of lawmakers and other entities, is mulling whether to being its own review of the incident, according to a spokesman (exclusive prediction: they're gonna look into it).

Lawmakers from Colorado and New Mexico want President Barack Obama to send some federal resources their way to help deal with the spill. Sens. Michael Bennet, Cory Gardner, Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich and Reps. Scott Tipton and Ben Ray Luján note that it's likely the Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Health and Human Services will get involved, along with the CDC's Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. They also call for increased transparency and oversight of water testing and claims reimbursement. Read:
<http://1.usa.gov/1JUE6X8>

RUBIO - EPA SPILL SHOWS 'ARROGANCE': The spill has made its way into the presidential race. Republican presidential candidate Marco Rubio said yesterday that the Animas River spill was caused by 'the incompetence of the EPA.' Farmers in the area may lose their crops if they can't use river water for irrigation, the Florida senator said, according to a transcript of Rubio's 'Hugh Hewitt Show' appearance circulated by his campaign. The bigger problem is that EPA is 'completely unresponsive,' Rubio added, echoing a complaint from some local residents and state officials. 'They clam up. So it's not just the crisis they've created. It's their response to it that belies arrogance and this notion that, 'Yea, we're sorry it happened but we don't need to give you any more information because we're the EPA and you can't do anything to us.' So I think it's both incompetence and arrogance at play.'

Boehner weighs in: House Speaker John Boehner reiterates that lawmakers will be looking into the spill. "The House will continue to monitor the situation and the appropriate committees will conduct rigorous oversight to make sure the administration is assessing the damage the EPA has caused and taking action to clean it up. Now that his EPA has accepted full responsibility, I expect President Obama to demand full accountability for what happened here."

A PICTURE SAYS A THOUSAND WORDS: EPA posted some snapshots of McCarthy's trip, which included looking at water, talking to people and struggling to see the press over a too-tall podium ("Next time I'll have a little box to stand on," she promised). <http://1.usa.gov/1h49ozU>

CLEANUP COMPANY GOT HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS IN CONTRACTS FROM EPA: The Wall Street Journal takes a look at the contractor working on the mine cleanup, Missouri-based Environmental Restoration LLC. "Environmental Restoration is one of the largest EPA emergency cleanup contractors. It is the main provider for the EPA's emergency cleanup and rapid response needs in the region that covers Colorado, as well as in several other parts of the country. ... From October 2007 through this month, Environmental Restoration has been awarded \$381 million in federal contracts, according to government procurement data compiled on USAspending.gov." WSJ: <http://on.wsj.com/1L6GR6k>

Mark your calendar: The Journal also notes the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will hold a hearing on the spill when Congress returns in September.

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